

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claims 5 and 9-14 without prejudice or disclaimer, amend claims 1 and 6-8, and add new claims 15-19, as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) An information recording apparatus for recording information by irradiating light onto a multilayer information recording medium, the multilayer information recording medium having at least a first layer containing an electro-chromic material, sandwiched by electrode layers applying a voltage to said first layer to color said first layer, and a second layer containing an electro-chromic material sandwiched by electrode layers; comprising:
means for applying the voltage to said first layer;
first optical irradiating means for irradiating a first optical spot onto said first layer to speed up one of a coloring operation and a de-coloring operation of said second layer; and second optical irradiating means for irradiating a second optical spot onto said second layer after irradiating said first optical spot onto said first layer.
2. (Original) An information recording apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein, both said first optical spot and said second optical spot correspond to substantially parallel laser beams, and wherein both said first optical irradiating means and said second optical irradiating means constitute a plurality of light sources arrayed along a substantially same straight line.
3. (Original) An information recording apparatus as claimed in claim 2 , further comprising means for positioning both said first optical spot and second optical spot on the same track or within number of 3 tracks.
4. (Original) An information recording apparatus as claimed in claim 2, further comprising means for detecting one of a tracking error signal and a track-address signal by one of the beams by employing at least two laser beams irradiated from said plurality of light sources.
5. (Cancelled)

6. (Currently Amended) An information recording apparatus as claimed in claim 1, further comprising means for performing an auto-focusing operation by irradiating said first optical spot onto said first layer to speed up one of a coloring operation and a de-coloring operation of said second layer.
7. (Currently Amended) An information recording method using an information recording medium having at least a first layer containing an electro-chromic material, sandwiched by electrode layers applying a voltage to said first layer to color said first layer, and a second layer containing an electro-chromic material sandwiched by electrode layers provided on the light incident side with respect to said first layer, comprising the steps of;
- applying a voltage to said electrode layers;
 - irradiating a first optical spot onto said first layer [[:]] thereby increasing a speed of a coloring reaction of said second layer ~~by irradiating said first optical spot onto said first layer;~~ and
 - irradiating said second optical spot onto said second layer to record information thereon after irradiating said first optical spot onto said first layer.
8. (Currently Amended) An information recording method using an information recording medium having at least a first layer containing an electro-chromic material sandwiched by electrode layers applying a voltage to said first layer to color said first layer, and a second layer containing an electro-chromic material sandwiched by electrode layers located on a side opposite to a light incident side with respect to said first layer, comprising the steps of:
- applying a voltage to said electrode layer;
 - irradiating a first optical spot onto said first layer[[:]] thereby increasing a speed of a de-coloring reaction of said second layer ~~by irradiating said first optical spot onto said first layer;~~ and
 - irradiating a second optical spot onto said second layer after irradiating said first optical spot onto said first layer.
- 9-14. (Cancelled)

15. (New) An information recording apparatus for recording information by irradiating light onto a multilayer information recording medium, the multilayer information recording medium having at least a first layer containing an electro-chromic material, sandwiched by electrode layers applying a voltage to said first layer to color said first layer, and a second layer containing an electro-chromic material sandwiched by electrode layers; comprising:
- means for applying the voltage to said first layer;
 - first optical irradiating means for irradiating a first optical spot with a wavelength sufficient for recording on said recording medium onto said first layer;
 - and
 - second optical irradiating means for irradiating a second optical spot with said wavelength onto said second layer after irradiating said first optical spot onto said first layer.
16. (New) An information recording apparatus as claimed in claim 15 wherein, both said first optical spot and said second optical spot correspond to substantially parallel laser beams with said wavelength sufficient for recording on said recording medium, and wherein both said first optical irradiating means and said second optical irradiating means constitute a plurality of light sources arrayed along a substantially same straight line.
17. (New) An information recording apparatus as claimed in claim 16, further comprising means for positioning both said first optical spot and second optical spot which correspond to substantially parallel laser beams with said wavelength sufficient for recording on said recording medium on the same track or within number of 3 tracks.
18. (New) An information recording apparatus as claimed in claim 16, further comprising means for detecting one of a tracking error signal and a track-address signal by one of the beams by employing at least two laser beams irradiated from said plurality of light sources with said wavelength sufficient for recording on said recording medium.
19. (New) An information recording apparatus as claimed in claim 15, further comprising means for performing an auto-focusing operation by irradiating said first optical spot onto said first layer.